

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, UR, ELAB

SUBJ: FURTHER SOVIET COMPLAINT ON TRADE UNION VISAS

REF: MOSCOW 10447

1. POL COUNSELOR WAS SUMMONED SEPT 7 BY BUBNOV, COUNSELOR, USA DIVISION, TO RECEIVE ORAL STATEMENT CONCERNING REFUSAL OF VISAS TO SOVIET FOOD INDUSTRY TRADE UNION DELEGATION (REFTEL). TRANSLATION OF ORAL STATEMENT FOLLOWS.

2. BEGIN TEXT: AT BEGINNING OF THIS YEAR, AMALGAMATED MEAT CUTTERS AND BUTCHERS OF NORTH AMERICA OFFICIALLY INVITED DELEGATION OF TRADE UNION OF FOOD INDUSTRY WORKERS OF U.S.S.R. TO VISIT U.S. ON RETURN VISIT.

SOVIET TRADE UNION ACCEPTED INVITATION. DELEGATION OF FOUR PERSONS HEADED BY CHAIRMAN OF TRADE UNION OF FOOD INDUSTRY WORKERS WAS PREPARED TO LEAVE FOR U.S. AT AGREED TIME. AMERICAN VISAS FOR THIS DELEGATION WERE REQUESTED THROUGH U.S.A. EMBASSY IN MOSCOW ON JULY 15.

ON AUGUST 24, EMBASSY INFORMED CONSULAR ADMINISTRATION THAT VISAS WERE REFUSED. U.S.A. STATE DEPARTMENT CONFIRMED THIS REFUSAL TO SOVIET EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON. WE CANNOT BUT
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BE PERPLEXED BY THIS POSITION OF STATE DEPARTMENT, WHICH HINDERS

ESTABLISHMENT AND BROADENING OF CONTACTS BETWEEN SOVIETS AND AMERICAN TRADE UNIONS DESIRING TO HAVE SUCH CONTACTS.

THIS CLEARLY DOES NOT ACCORD WITH PRESENT DEVELOPMENTS OF SOVIET-AMERICAN RELATIONS OR WITH OBJECTIVES OF RECENTLY CONCLUDED GENERAL AGREEMENT ON CONTACTS, EXCHANGES, AND COOPERATION. END TEXT.

3. POL COUNSELOR RESPONDED THAT VISA REFUSALS TO WHICH BUBNOV REFERRED WERE, AS PREVIOUSLY EXPLAINED, BASED ON LONG-STANDING U.S. POLICY WHICH TOOK INTO ACCOUNT THE VIEWS OF MAINSTREAM OF U.S. LABOR MOVEMENT, BUT THAT BUBNOV'S STATEMENT WOULD BE FULLY REPORTED TO WASHINGTON AND GIVEN CAREFUL CONSIDERATION THERE.

4. IN SUBSEQUENT "PERSONAL" COMMENTS EVOKED BY REFERENCE TO CURRENT PRESS REPORTS ON THIS SUBJECT (SEPTTEL), BUBNOV SAID THAT SOVIET NEWSPAPER ARTICLES ARE NOT INTENDED IN PROPAGANDISTIC SPIRIT BUT REFLECT FACT THAT SOVIET TRADE UNION PEOPLE ARE UNDERSTANDABLY UPSET THAT THEIR EFFORTS TO DEVELOP COHACTS ARE MET WITH REJECTION AND INSULTS DESPITE AN OBVIOUS DESIRE ON THE PART OF SOME AMERICAN UNIONS TO DEVELOP CONTACTS. HE ADDED THAT AMERICAN UNIONS WHICH SEEK SUCH CONTACTS ARE NOT SMALL AND UNIMPORTANT, AS SOVIET EMBASSY WAS TOLD BY STATE DEPARTMENT, BUT REPRESENT ASPIRATIONS OF MILLIONS OF PEOPLE ON BOTH SIDES TO DEVELOP NORMAL, FRIEDNDLY CONTACTS.

5. COMMENT: SOVIETS ARE OBVIOUSLY EXCERCISED ON THIS QUESTION, AS INDICATED BY FACT THAT PREVIOUS LESS FORMAL REPRESENTATIONS BY KORNIENKO TO ME, BY BUBNOV, AND IN WASHINGTON HAVE NOW BEEN FOLLOWED UP BY OFFICIAL DEMARCHE. WE CAN IMAGINE THAT MFA IS UNDER HEAVY PRESSURE ON THIS SUBJECT FROM TRADE UNION BUREAUCRACY AND FROM THOSE WHO DEFEND DETENTE ON GROUNDS THAT IT SERVES SOVIET OBJECTIVES INTER ALIA IN TRADE UNION FIELD. EMBASSY ASSUMES DEPARTMENT IS CONTINUING TO MONITOR AMERICAN LABOR ATTITUDES FOR INDICATIONS THAT A REAPPRAISLA OF U.S. POLICY MIGHT BE IN ORDER.
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